S. D. 96. [This leaflet is distributed only with the seed to which it relates.]

United States Department of Agriculture

BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY

New and Rare Seed Distribution

WASHINGTON, D. C.

KURSK MILLET

OBJECT OF THE DISTRIBUTION.—The distribution of new and rare seeds has for its object the dissemination of new and rare crops, improved strains of staple crops, and high-grade seed of crops new to sections where the data of the department indicate such crops to be of considerable promise. Each package contains a sufficient quantity for a preliminary trial, and where it is at all practicable the recipient is urged to use the seed for the production of stocks for future plantings. It is believed that if this practice is followed consistently it will result in a material improvement in the crops of the country.

Please make a full report on the inclosed blank regarding the results you obtain with the seed.

DESCRIPTION

Kursk millet (*Chaetochloa italica*) is a selected strain of Siberian millet which was introduced by the United States Department of Agriculture and has been bred in South Dakota for drought resistance, hardiness, and uniformity. It was given the name Kursk from the Province in Russia where it was obtained. It is a dependable millet for the dry regions and is adapted to the same region as the Siberian variety.

SEEDING

The short season of growth permits considerable latitude in respect to the time of seeding. Millet should not be sown, however, until the ground is warm. This means, ordinarily, about two or three weeks after corn-planting time, which in the Central States would place the earliest planting about the last of May. It can be sown any time between this date and August 1; the last seeding, however, should allow 60 to 70 days of growing season before the normal date of the first killing frost.

The seed bed for millet should be prepared by plowing and repeated harrowing. It can be seeded on cornstalk ground, but the best results are obtained by seeding on spring plowing, especially if care is used to level and compact the seed bed.

Millet can be sown broadcast and harrowed in or planted with a grain drill. When good seed is used 20 to 25 pounds per acre are sufficient, and in the drier sections this can be reduced to 12 or 15 pounds.

Where the season is long, it is often possible to procure a crop of millet after another crop, such as oats, barley, or wheat, has been re-

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moved. In such cases the ground may be prepared for seeding by disking. Such double cropping, however, is not a good practice, since it is hard on the land, both crops being surface feeders to a great extent.

One feature that should be borne in mind is to have the ground level after seeding, so that clods and other rough places will not interfere with the mower. This result may be accomplished by rolling or planking the field after it is seeded. Where the rainfall is light or where there is danger from blowing, a harrow should follow the roller to prevent the surface from baking or blowing.

HARVESTING

The foxtail millets cure easily and are handled the same way as any other hay crop. If the hay is designed for general use, i. e., for feeding both cattle and horses, it should be cut just after blooming; if it is intended for cattle or sheep exclusively it may be allowed to become somewhat more mature and can then be cut when the seed is in the late milk stage. Where a seed crop is the object, millet is best harvested with a grain binder, placed in shocks like bundle grain, and threshed in the same way. In some sections where millet is being grown for seed the farmers plant it in rows sufficiently far apart to cultivate. This practice gives an especially good quality of seed, but, of course, requires more labor.

The quality of millet hay produced is rather inferior, especially if allowed to become too ripe before it is cut. No danger is experienced in feeding it to either cattle or sheep, but instances of unfavorable results when fed to horses are numerous. The hay is slightly laxative and also acts as a diuretic, its effect on the kidneys being particularly noticeable in horses. Hay intended for feeding horses should be cut before the seed has formed; such hay is more palatable and is not so injurious.

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